

Online Webinar: IP and the SDGs in the Caribbean

**10.00 a.m. - 11.00 a.m. (Eastern Time)
Tuesday, 23 April 2024**

A discussion on the impact of intellectual property on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in recognition of World IP Day 2024

On 23rd April 2024, IPCA's Enforcement and Anti-Counterfeiting Committee held a webinar under the theme: "IP and the SDGs in the Caribbean". Moderated by the Chair of the Turtle Team, Mr. Mikhail Jackson, with help from Board Liaison Mr. Jose Santana, the webinar took the format of a vibrant discussion featuring guest speakers, Mr. Andrés Bisonó León, founder and CEO of SOS Carbon, a company based in the Dominican Republic which is doing amazing work in the harvesting of sargassum across Caribbean waters using patented and patent-pending technology; and Mr. Michael McCarthy, Managing Director for Clean Harbours Jamaica Limited, a company based in Jamaica whose mission is the systematic cleanup and restoration of natural harbours, gullies and streams through various patented technology including the Ocean Cleanup's Interceptor Tender and Barriers which are used to collect waste from Jamaica's waters.

Each speaker gave an overview of the exciting work they are doing in their respective countries, with Andres highlighting the overuse of synthetic chemical fertilizers which end up in our oceans and other irresponsible activities and the prevalence of sargassum. Andres explored the high capacity harvesting of seaweed through the help of local coastal communities and shared that they are currently operational in four (4) countries: Dominican Republic, Antigua & Barbuda, Mexico and Puerto Rico with plans to expand. Andres shared the impact of the harvesting on carbon offsetting and how they have used their collection to develop a seaweed-based bio-stimulant called Ocean Sustain to reduce synthetic fertilizer while increasing crop yield. Andres charged attendees to reflect on their personal role in climate action and ask themselves how they can participate in taking a stand.

Along this theme, Michael shared how important it was for ownership by members of our society in improving their own environment. Whilst lamenting the pollution challenges within the region, he highlighted the success of his company in the deployment of interceptor barriers through international Dutch partners The Ocean Cleanup who have a mandate of ridding the world's oceans of plastics by 2030. He shared how despite already having patented technology, they had to adapt these barriers through other inventive steps to make them suitable for the Jamaican ecosystem. Michael also emphasized how important it is to protect the IP in the various technologies which are used to both ensure return for inventors and protection of novel ideas. Michael also spoke on plans to expand and meet ambitious collection targets before 2025 and doing quality testing of the water to ensure the work they are doing has a positive impact on the sustainability of the island's water system.

The discussion was well appreciated by all attendees and the Team looks forward to hosting more of these insightful, uplifting and thought provoking discussions in the near future.